

With my best wishes
11.12.21 THE *J. P. Casgrain*

SENATE DEBATES



HON. SENATOR J. P. B. CASGRAIN

OTTAWA, OCTOBER 13, 1903

THE SENATE DEBATES

THIRD SESSION—NINTH PARLIAMENT

SPEECH

OF

HON. SENATOR J. P. B. CASGRAIN

ON THE

NAT. TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILWAY BILL

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1903

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN (de Lanaudière)—I humbly confess that I rise with considerable diffidence to reply to the arguments of the hon. leader of the opposition. Nevertheless it will be noticed that he has left a great number of the most important features of this very important measure to those who are to follow him. He has dealt at considerable length on the bonding privilege and he has apparently given great care and thought to the preparation of that part of his speech, and he has done something which is very unusual for the hon. gentleman who, as we know, is so ready of speech—he has taken the trouble on this important occasion to read the first part of his speech. As to the bonding privilege which he has alluded to at such great length, I understand other hon. gentlemen on this side of the House hold different views to him on that question. Let me draw the attention of the Senate to one fact, that when the hon. gentleman himself was in conference with the Hon. J. D. Blaine, the latter told him that the United States government never thought of doing a thing as stopping the bonding privilege and that there was positively no use in build-

ing another Sault Ste. Marie canal; nevertheless the hon. gentleman had no faith in such promises and the government built the canal notwithstanding. As to the speech of the Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which has been alluded to, concerning the bonding privilege, when Sir Wilfrid Laurier made his speech in the House of Commons and gave the reasons why if we wished to live in peace and harmony with our neighbours to the south the best thing to do was to have as little as possible to do with them. He quoted letters from Mr. Carnegie, showing how and when this bonding privilege may be stopped at any moment. He also quoted a message from Mr. Cleveland and at every turn and corner in the policy advocated by Canada this threat was held, like the sword of Damocles, over the Canadian parliament and people, and the House of Commons cheered him to the echo when he announced that the intention of this measure was to build on Canadian territory, on British soil, one grand transcontinental line from ocean to ocean. It will be remembered that when the Canadian Pacific Railway was projected it was not intended to build it from ocean

to ocean. It was to start from Ontario and give us connection with British Columbia, because that was one of the terms of union. There was no intention at the time of taking the Canadian Pacific Railway as far as the Atlantic ocean. In fact a point in Ontario was selected at some distance west of the city of Ottawa for the eastern terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and we all remember, especially does the hon. leader of the opposition know and remember, the huge fight that was made against the government of which he was a member at the time to endeavour to have the eastern terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway as far east as the city of Quebec and compel them to buy the North Shore Railway. This may be ancient history, but it bears on the point that this is the first instance in which a great transcontinental line is established from ocean to ocean by one single measure. When I say from ocean to ocean, we know how short the distance is from Moncton to the sea-shore. My hon. friend made light of the military advantages of this line. Well, the military advantages of this line are considerable, and I may say that one of the strongest arguments in favour of the Trans-Canada line from Roberval and north of Lake Winnipeg, and so on to the same objective point, Fort Simpson, one of the strongest arguments in England was the recommendation of the War Office and the military authorities, which recommendation urged the building of the line at a good distance from the boundary of the United States. The mere fact that between Moncton and Lévis for a short distance there is a chance of the line being cut because we pass near the borders of the United States is not worth considering for no one would think of marching an army through the wilderness of Maine away up north and intersecting the line at that point. It will be noticed that at the northern part of Maine there are no facilities for transport. On the other hand, an hon. gentleman, when speaking on the first reading of the Grand Trunk Pacific Incorporation Bill alluded to the fact that the Canadian Pacific Railway might be cut by an enemy on the north shore of Lake Superior, and this is quite right. It would be quite easy for them to cut the Canadian Pacific Railway at any point from Lake Superior. My hon.

friend has not proved, to my satisfaction at any rate, that the construction of this line is inopportune, premature and not necessary, and I believe that his views on that question, if those are his views, are not the views of the majority of the representatives of the people in the other Chamber, nor of the majority of the members of this House. I believe, on the contrary, that if there ever was a time, as the hon. Secretary of State has said, when such a road should be built it is at this present moment, as I will proceed in a few moments to prove. The rapid settlement of the country will so stimulate trade that the interest that the government will be called upon to assume can easily be met by the addition to the revenue from this year's settlers. The criticism on the location of the line is certainly the burden of nearly all the speeches made in the other House, and probably the same criticism will be made in this House. Starting at the initial point of the road, Moncton, we all remember the long debate that took place as to the advisability of starting at Moncton. It was finally decided that Moncton being situated in the heart of the maritime provinces, that was the place from which it should start. The Intercolonial Railway deviating so far to the north, not furnishing a direct route to the west, had to be abandoned and the line running directly from Moncton to Edmundston was adopted. This is no new proposition. As far back as fifteen or eighteen years ago—and the hon. senators from New Brunswick will bear me out in this—the line was actually surveyed through that part of the country, and very easy grades were obtained. It has always been a mystery to me, in looking over the map of New Brunswick, to see that immense territory over which the proposed line of this national transcontinental line is to pass at a distance of 100 miles south of the Intercolonial Railway at the longest offset point, almost untouched by the hands of man. There is on that territory excellent timber, good facilities to get it out and facilities to carry on lumbering operations with the greatest of ease.

According to the speeches made by representatives from that province, and according to official reports the greater part of the soil of that district is fit for cultivation. The opening of a line from Moncton to Ed-

mundaton will fill a long-felt want, and will shorten the distance from Moncton to Quebec some 75 or 80 or perhaps 90 miles, according to the amount which the experts now wish to allow for the necessary curvature. From Edmundston, skirting around the northern boundary of Maine, which unfortunately projects so far into the Dominion of Canada, we arrive in the county of Temiscouata, and in that county the road will pass through a settlement which is now rapidly increasing and demanding railway facilities. From Temiscouata we pass to the rear of Kamouraska and from Kamouraska we pass to L'Islet, Montmagny, Bellefleur and Lévis. The idea of building a railway line at the rear of these counties is not a new proposition. This parliament has granted charters to the Quebec and New Brunswick Railway. Another charter was being asked this year, I believe, in the interests of Mackenzie and Mann to build a railroad over the same line. I see the hon. gentleman for Stadacona (Hon. Mr. Landry) smiling; he knows perfectly well that there is a large quantity of very good land at the rear of the county which he had the honour of representing in the other House, good, fertile land, some 25 or 30 miles back from the shore of the St. Lawrence. In the county of Montmagny, and all along there are parishes in the county of L'Islet which my father represented in the Commons for nineteen consecutive years, parishes of importance, settled parishes, namely Ste. Perpétue and St. Pamphile, which are 30 or 40 miles from the nearest railway. If these people had had advocates in this House as energetic as some of the people who represent the North-west they would have clamoured long ago for a railway to connect with Lévis, where the transcontinental railway crosses over the Quebec bridge, which will certainly be built in time to receive this road. From Quebec to the St. Maurice river is perhaps the most difficult part of the country for 90 or 95 miles, perhaps 100 miles, that this transcontinental railway will have traversed, a very rough and difficult country, but not an impossible country. There are already two railways built in that same country. We have the Quebec and Lake St. John Railway and we have the Great Northern Railway, starting

from Rivière à Pierre and proceeding westward. Considerable money may have to be spent to obtain the very easy grades required for this road, but once we have passed the St. Maurice river we arrive at the magnificent plateau which extends north and south for over 100 miles and that extends east and west for over 900 miles, according to the reports of the Geological Department. When the hon. leader of the opposition said we had not sufficient information on the subject, I would ask if any gentleman having read the blue-book that is before us, the numerous official reports, the special and distinct information on the twelve sections of this line between Quebec and Winnipeg—which has been prepared with such care—and deny that mountains of information are available on this subject? From section 1 to section 12, over every mile of the road, the most distinct and positive information is given. I doubt very much if any one in this Senate could, after reading this book, say there was no information about that line. This table land is reported as being perfectly level, according to the reports of the geological bureau, from the St. Maurice river, which is about 100 miles west of the city of Quebec, at an elevation of 800 feet. Over this clay belt, according to the geological bureau, in the next 700 or 700 miles there is not a difference in level of 200 feet.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Where does the hon. gentleman get that from?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN (de Lanaudière)—In this book.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—That is the Trans-Canada road that the hon. gentleman is talking about.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN (de Lanaudière)—I beg the hon. gentleman's pardon. This is the blue-book entitled 'National Transcontinental Railway; Resources of the country between Winnipeg and Quebec along the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific,' with map attached, and the map is divided into twelve sections.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Does the map show the location of the road?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN (de Lanaudière)—Precisely.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Is that the true location ?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN (de Lanaudière)—Hon. gentlemen who are accustomed to take part in the Railway Committee have the plans of proposed location furnished, and I understand this plan here shows the route which is the most feasible route; the elevations are marked on it and there are no impossibilities that I can see to this road being within reasonable distance of the points marked on this map.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Will the hon. gentleman answer the question I put him just now ?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN (de Lanaudière)—I would be obliged if the hon. gentleman would kindly allow me to proceed. The hon. gentleman is in the habit of making remarks in order to interrupt those who are speaking. I would like the hon. gentleman to be a little bit serious, for I suppose this is a serious discussion. He ought to know; he is the only member of this House who persistently interrupts hon. gentlemen while speaking.

Hon. Mr. SCOTT—It is about six o'clock, and we might rise now, but before the Speaker leaves the Chair, I would like to give notice that when the House rises tomorrow it do stand adjourned till Friday morning at 11 o'clock. We will not sit on Thursday, Thanksgiving Day.

After Recess.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—At six o'clock when the Speaker left the Chair, we had just started together on our western journey. We had left the ancient capital of Quebec and we had crosses the St. Maurice river and had just entered on that magnificent table land, which, as I said, extends about 900 miles east and west containing an area of some 50,000,000 acres of land, or enough to make some 250 townships. The hon. leader of the opposition stated this afternoon that in his opinion no necessity was for the building of this road at present, and I may say that his opinion as to the necessity of building this line is shared by some members in the other House. For instance the ex-Minister of Railways, the Hon. A. G.

Blair, also thought there was no immediate necessity to proceed with the enterprise. I am surprised that during the long protracted debate which took place in the House of Commons no one recalled an incident which is very well known in the city of Montreal when a great banquet was given to Mr. Charles M. Hays on the occasion of his departure from the city of Montreal to take the control of a large railway line in California, I believe. At that banquet the hon. gentleman from de Lorimier was asked to speak on behalf of the Senate at the last moment. He was not able to be present and asked me to represent his Chamber on that occasion. The Hon. Mr. Blair was there representing the government, and also the House of Commons. On that occasion it was my privilege to speak of the high estimation which I felt for Mr. Hays, and I am glad to see that the hon. leader of the opposition has done the same thing this afternoon. The hon. gentleman said that Mr. Hays was one of the best railway men, probably second to none in Canada to-day, and perhaps had few peers in the United States. Mr. Blair at that time had had a little friction with the Canadian Pacific Railway. It was the first time he had an opportunity of speaking in the city of Montreal after this friction, and he thought he would let the Canadian Pacific Railway know a piece of his mind. Speaking on behalf of the House of Commons, in reply to the toast, he said in the presence of some 200 of the most prominent business men of the city of Montreal who were attending Mr. Hays' banquet on the occasion of his departure—that no one could think for one moment that those immense territories in the North-west could long be dependent upon one single line of railway. Before we would be much older, not only two lines of railway, but he thought as many as ten lines of railway would find access to and get enough business out of those territories to pay handsome returns to their shareholders. That was the opinion of a gentleman whom the opposition in another place have taken great satisfaction in saying was not in favour at the present moment of the construction of this road.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Is the hon. gentleman referring to the report of that speech or is he speaking from memory ?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—I am speaking from memory, I was present myself and had spoken immediately before the hon. gentleman, and it struck me as there were many representatives of the Canadian Pacific Railway present at that banquet, he was rather using forcible language—perhaps going a little bit out of his way to annoy the Canadian Pacific Railway president; and I am surprised that during this long debate which has occupied days and weeks in another place no one ever referred to that statement made publicly in the largest city of this country, that not only would three or four lines be necessary in Manitoba and the North-west Territories but even ten lines would not be too many before we were very much older to carry on the business of that country.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—About what time of the night was that speech made?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—I suppose it must have been about half-past ten, or, to be like the Scotchman, it might have been a quarter to eleven. The Canadian Pacific Railway out of a population of half a million people in the North-west last year has had the enormous receipts, according to their last report, of some \$44,000,000, equal to \$5,000 for every mile of road under their control and in operation. The hon. member for Calgary said in this House the other day that the influx of population into the North-west this present year would be almost 100,000 people. At that ratio of increase we would have in the North-west before the completion of this railway another half a million people, or a million people altogether. The other 500,000 people if they furnished the same amount of business as these who are already there—and we have no reason to believe they will be inferior to them, will create a trade or a business of an equal amount, \$44,000,000 or \$5,000 for every mile of road under control of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. We know the mileage of the Canadian Pacific Railway and we know the mileage of this proposed transcontinental line, and we are at a loss to see why some time ago even, advantage had not been taken to build another transcontinental line on the old route selected some twenty-five years before under the government of Hon. Alexander Mackenzie. During the last year

in the North-west, some 30,000 homesteads have been taken, which means 30,000 farms. Now, if there has been congestion of traffic and the Canadian Pacific Railway has been unable to transport all the grain to market in sufficient time under present conditions, what will it be next year when they will have those 30,000 additional farms, furnishing freight for the railways to carry to the east? Supposing for one moment that a number of ourselves would form a syndicate and were given that immense territory running from the St. Maurice river to within a few miles of the city of Winnipeg and extending north almost to James bay, taking it at the lowest estimate of 100 miles wide, would it be long before such a syndicate would arrange, even if they had to give a great part of the territory for it, to have a railroad into that country? Why, taking the business done in this Chamber, if they were associated together they would not rest for one moment before they would make arrangement with some corporation or company to build a railroad through it in order to give value to that land. That railway concerns chiefly the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. In the province of Quebec there is at the outside, I suppose, some 280 miles of road to be built, that is from the point in Temiscouata to Moncton. The balance, some 600 miles is all within the province of Quebec, and some 700 miles in the province of Ontario, leaving a distance of some hundred and fifty or perhaps only 135 miles within the province of Manitoba. In the province of Quebec the country is particularly well known. It is well wooded, nearly all is good arable land, well timbered. There is a large amount of pulp-wood and the development of the pulp-wood industry in Quebec is immense. I have only to instance the Laurentide Pulp Company at Grand'Mère, an institution where two and a half million dollars have been spent and one additional million this year where they are making profit enough to pay handsome dividends of eight per cent even on the common stock. I may say that the land from which the pulp-wood comes to Grand'Mère, from the sources of the St. Maurice and Mattawake rivers, is located exactly where this line is to pass. At the very source where this timber is cut there are to-day immense wheat fields and

splendid meadows from which the shanties that are producing this lumber are supplied. Just when the Trans-Canada was agitating the public mind in Quebec—

Hon. Mr. PERLEY—Have they any flour mills up there?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—We will have some shortly. When the Trans-Canada was agitating the public mind we all remember very well the astounding declaration which was made by the Prime Minister on the floor of the legislature in Quebec that he had an offer made to him provided a railway was put into that country, of \$1.50 per acre for five million acres of land.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Where is Roberts?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—25,000,000 acres of land for which the Prime Minister of the province of Quebec had received an offer of \$1.50 per acre, sufficient to pay the whole debt of the province of Quebec. If that was a useless wilderness, or the unproductive land that some one would represent it to be, is it likely that these capitalists would have offered—and this statement was made by the Prime Minister of Quebec, in the local legislature under his authority as Prime Minister—would have offered any such sum? Now, the geography of the valley of the St. Lawrence is well known: Leaving Montreal and going eastward we have on the north shore of the river a narrow strip of land fit for cultivation some 30 miles in width, and this strip is getting narrower and narrower as we approach the city of Quebec where the mountains range actually forms part of the city. The colonization of that part of the country has been impeded for years and years owing to the fact that our colonization companies have endeavoured to settle the Laurentian range, which is 30 miles in width. That is to say, we have from the River St. Lawrence, thirty miles back, a belt of good land fit for cultivation. Then we have thirty miles to cross the Laurentian range, making a distance at right angles north from the St. Lawrence river of 60 or 70 miles, when you enter into this rich clay belt. The colonization of the northern slope of the Laurentian range has been successfully carried on. It is no new proposition. As far back as thirty years ago, for instance, the parish of St. Zenon, in the county of

Berthier, was established. One enterprising parish priest, seeing, under the old conservative regime, the people leaving the country and going to the States to work in factories and so on, and finding it impossible to colonize and establish good farms in the Laurentian hills, was enterprising enough to cross the range some thirty miles and establish on the northern slope of the hills the parish of St. Zenon, which I visited last year, and which is prosperous at the present time. Another priest took his flock some twenty miles further north of this parish, and there established another parish, St. Michel des Saints, which I also visited last year. It is on the Mattawin river. I regret alluding to personal experience or giving my personal knowledge, but the hon. leader of the opposition stated that he had seen Bute Inlet and other places on the Pacific coast, and I would ask the House to allow me to state what I have seen. The parish of St. Michel des Saints is seventy miles north of the St. Lawrence. I see one member of this House who represented the very county in which St. Michel des Saints is situated, and I am sure he will bear me out when I say that it is seventy miles from the nearest railway, and it is at the same time a prosperous parish, and the fertility of the soil is so good that these people living seventy miles from a railway can live comfortably, manufacturing cheese and butter, and haul their produce to St. Felix de Valois, which is the nearest station. Everything they have to use, agricultural implements, &c., have to be teamed from St. Felix de Valois to St. Michel des Saints over a wagon road. These colonies will be within some thirty miles of the line this road will take, but the indications are that the line will pass much closer to that place. The information that I obtained when I was there would leave one to believe that you could go 100 miles north from that parish without ascending a single hill. The mail-carrier for the Hudson Bay post on the northern side of this belt, who travelled that route over and over again, stated that in all that long journey to the north he did not ascend a single hill or meet one break in the road. These facts are corroborated by the Geological Department. This is nothing which is absolutely new. Still I have heard the ex-Minister of Railways in the

Conservative government, the Hon. Mr. J. G. Haggart, saying that this was a land of granite ridges and of muskegs unfathomable. I wish most publicly, and with the certainty of one who has seen for himself, to give a most explicit denial of that statement—and I know that every word an hon. member utters in this Chamber under the responsibility of the position that we occupy should be most carefully considered by us—so as to dispel any idea that exists that the line along this route is not of the very best, and that the crops that are raised there are not equal to those of any other district. And why should it not be so? No one will deny the fertility of the farms at Lake St. John, and there is no point on this line as far north as Lake St. John. The line of the transcontinental railway follows the 48th parallel. It is the same parallel as the Bale des Chaleurs. This 48th parallel is recognized to be about on the same isothermal lines, and we know that in going west the isothermal line inclines northward, so that the climate in that district would be about equal to the climate of Winnipeg and the quantity of snow about the same. This 48th parallel runs at a distance south of Winnipeg, and we know that in Winnipeg and Manitoba you can grow wheat and every other vegetable. The 48th parallel would be 140 miles south of Winnipeg. In Ontario the average line of the railway would be in the 50th degree of latitude, exactly the same as Winnipeg, and the same remarks apply along that line. I shall refer very briefly to the contract. I think it is the best arrangement any government has ever made, and my only surprise is that the Grand Trunk Railway was so anxious to enter into such an agreement. As far as west of Winnipeg is concerned, there is no comparison at all between what the government is at present doing and giving to the Grand Trunk Pacific Company and what the former government gave to the Canadian Pacific Railway. We all know that the Canadian Pacific Railway received some 25,000,000 acres of land. There is not a single acre of land given in this contract, except the land necessary for the right of way. They gave also \$25,000,000 in cash to the Canadian Pacific Railway; not a single dollar in cash is being given to this project. West of Winnipeg, as far as the prairie section is concerned, the railway

does not cost this country one cent. There is no use discussing the feasibility of the line through the North-west, the country being level prairie. Any one driving through that section can see that the construction of the road is most feasible. When we talk of this line going to Saskatoon, Battleford, Edmonton and so on, these places are almost as well known as Halifax, St. John and Toronto.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—Surely the line does not go to Saskatoon?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—According to the map it does, and I do not see why this map showing the location, which is prepared and submitted by the government under their responsibility, to the hon. members on both Houses should not be right. The total guarantee amounts to 75 per cent or three-quarters of the bonds, and the Grand Trunk Pacific Company have to supply the additional 25 per cent. That is to say, if the road costs say \$16,000 per mile, the government guarantee will only be on the bonds to the extent of \$12,000. The remaining \$4,000 will stand as a second mortgage on the road. But it has been said that the Grand Trunk Pacific will never pay the interest on their bonds. The government has a guarantee of the \$150,000,000 of the assets of the old Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada, besides having as security the road itself, the guarantee being only three-quarters of the value of the road. The total cost in cash to this country has been fully demonstrated by the Minister of Finance of the country, Mr. Fielding, when he said that the cost in cash would not exceed \$14,000,000. The hon. Secretary of State in this House has made it over that. He has put it at between \$19,000,000 and \$20,000,000 for the period of ten years, making the burden on the people of this country some two millions a year for ten years. At \$14,000,000 it would simply mean the surplus of this one year, and if we take the extreme figures furnished by the hon. Secretary of State, it would take the surplus a year and a half to pay the whole amount. On the prairie section we know the government guarantee amounts to \$13,000 a mile and on the mountain section is \$30,000 a mile. It would naturally be to the interest of the Grand Trunk Pacific Company to have more miles of mountain sec-

tion and less miles of prairie section, but the contract provides that there shall be an arbitration to determine where the prairie section ends and where the mountain section begins, and that is, perhaps, the reason why the hon. Secretary of State was not exactly certain of the absolute mileage of the prairie section, because the point where the mountain section begins, is not easily defined. The Grand Trunk Pacific Company might be inclined to put it as far east as possible, while it would be the duty of the government to put it as far west as possible, and in case of a failure to agree it is provided in the contract that a commission of experts, or arbitrators shall be appointed, who will define, exactly how many miles there shall be at \$13,000 a mile and how many miles at \$30,000 a mile. The part west of Winnipeg concerns us very little. The Grand Trunk Pacific Company are building and paying for it themselves; the part which concerns us most is the section in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, the portion of the line which is to be a national highway, and one which all the railways will have equal right of way.

Hon. Mr. LANDRY—Before we leave the western section will the hon. gentleman be kind enough to tell us the length of the western section, prairie and mountain, from Winnipeg to Port Simpson?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—I have the map before me, and in a few minutes could scale it, but without doing so, I may state I think it will be between fifteen and sixteen hundred miles. When it was first mooted that the railway from Winnipeg to Quebec would be a national highway, having had a little experience in railway management, I must say I was astounded. I did not think at the moment it would be possible for a railway to be operated on those lines.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—I heard the ex-Minister of Railways, Mr. Blair, a man for whom I have great respect, and who has proved himself a very able railway manager, notwithstanding the opinion entertained by some hon. gentlemen opposite, make light of this joint operation of the railway, and instanced a train leaving Halifax or St. John and entering on this national highway and coming to the end of a section of say

120 or 140 miles, and requiring to have their engines stalled there in advance, or take time to rest and clean the engine and grates and so on before proceeding on their journey, and when the evening would come, or at the utmost twenty-four hours had elapsed, then the whole train would have to come to a standstill, because the train hands and every one connected with it would not be equal to the task of continuing without sleep. This was the speech of Mr. Blair, and it created some mirth in the House of Commons and gave great comfort to the opposition. I must say there are some railway experts in this country who are not friendly to the project who say it will be impossible to run a line under such circumstances. But it has been demonstrated satisfactorily that this will not be a matter of much difficulty. A commission will be appointed, as soon as the traffic will warrant it, and the government having absolute control over the line from Winnipeg to Quebec will be in a position to dictate the terms upon which every train shall be operated. It is not absolutely necessary to go into details, because we all know at present the Railway Committee of the Privy Council and after this session the board of which we have heard so much in this House while passing the new Railway Act, a Consolidation Bill, can grant to any railway running powers over another company's road, making them pay a certain amount which the board in the future and which the Railway Committee of the Privy Council now determine. So here is one of the great arguments against the national highway, and one I must say that some prominent railway men considered a strong one at first, which is proved to be unfounded? In the United States many roads are operated on the same principle. Now, there is another question, the question of grade. The hon. leader of the opposition this afternoon appeared to doubt very much if such grades as Mr. Charlton mentioned in the other House could be obtained. I have just demonstrated, and if I have done so at some length it is because I wanted to make the House sure about it, that on the table-land where this line is to be located there is practically no difference of level. I said this afternoon that according to the Geological Survey reports in 500 or 600 miles the difference in level is not more than a

couple of hundred feet. Admitting that it is double that, say 400 feet in that distance it would be equal to about one foot per mile, which in railroading is practically level. It is very simple to understand; we are not running over any summit on this road, but running parallel with a range of mountains, keeping near the height of land where the water flows both ways. It is a country which offers the greatest facilities for railway construction but where you are running parallel to the mountains you can get on a certain altitude and remain at that level. Every engineer knows that that is perfectly feasible. If we can locate a road through that table-land with a very easy grade, it may be possible to carry grain very cheaply. Within the last twenty or twenty-five years the advance which has been made in railway transportation is enormous. Some twenty years ago a train carrying 600 or 700 tons was supposed to be a big train. To-day, on the Canadian Pacific Railway, a train carries up to 1,500 or 1,700 tons. Look at what the United States Steel Corporation is doing, in carrying ore from Lake Erie to Pittsburg. This corporation purchased an almost adandoned road, straightened it out, strengthened the bridges, eased off the curves, put down 100 pound rails and used tremendous engines. I saw the other day that they used engines of 200 tons. I doubt it very much, but they are certainly using engines of 120 tons, hauling to Pittsburg on a down grade 2,600 tons of ore with each train load. If our railway is built in the same way, there is no reason why grain could not be hauled from the west, delivered in the city of Quebec at rates to compete with other routes. I have given this subject mature consideration. I have talked a great deal about this with many grain men in the city of Montreal and I really believe that when this road is in operation—and as I said before six o'clock the only part of the line that presents any difficulty is from St. Maurice to Quebec and that is down grade—there will be no difficulty in carrying grain to Quebec at a rate of something better than twelve and fourteen cents a bushel.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—From where?

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN—From Winnipeg, provided we have a railway the same as

the one used by the United States Steel Corporation, and admitting that the reports furnished us by the Geological Department and by the officials of the Ontario and Quebec governments give the correct altitude, there is no reason to doubt that grain can be carried from Winnipeg to Quebec at the rate I have mentioned. I may say that estimate is above that which was given in the House of Commons by some members. I regret to give personal knowledge, but I have been connected with this proposed line so long that I think I have something worth mentioning about it. In 1874 I was on the survey of the Canadian Pacific Railway from Lake Shebandowan towards the height of land, about 100 miles south of where this railway will pass. It has always been a surprise to me that the Canadian Pacific Railway should have been located where it is. If a difficult route had been looked for I do not know where they could have found one more difficult or traversing more of the poorest country in Canada than the one selected. We know that from North Bay and Sudbury all the way up to Port Arthur the local traffic is next to nothing. The cost of building that road was enormous. The Hon. Mr. Haggart stated in the House of Commons that it must have cost something like \$80,000 a mile. I have no reason to doubt it. There is no country on either side, no local traffic from Thunder Bay westward up the Kaministiquia river to Lake of the Woods. Until you strike the north-west angle the country is almost unfit for settlement. Now, if that railway had been built where this line is intended to be located, it would have cost about half as much and the grades would have been easier. Next session perhaps we will have before us the profile of the present Canadian Pacific Railway and in comparison with it the profile of the Grand Trunk Railway, and hon. gentlemen will be able to see for themselves the immense difference between them and the reason why, though it may not pay the Canadian Pacific Railway to haul grain over their high grades and sharp curves it will be easy to haul grain over the more modern route which will run through an almost level country. I was employed in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and it was rock cut after rock.

cut, steep grades, sharp curves and so on. As to the part in the prairie section north of Long Lake, in 1883 I spent the whole summer just about the place where this road will pass, and from there to the elbow of the Saskatchewan, some seventy miles south of where this line is to pass—I went through all that country and I know that it is very easy to build a railway there. I may say it was somewhere near there the old Mackenzie route was projected, and where you have prairie with islands of wood all the way, it is an excellent country for settlement.

It is really surprising that the Canadian Pacific Railway should have been located where it was. There may have been good reasons for it; one of them being the difficulty of getting supplies into that country at that time, and it was necessary to be near navigation, near Nipigon bay and Thunder bay, in order that supplies could be taken in to the people who were going to build the railway, and also for the surveyors and engineers who were going to locate the line. As to the cost of transportation of wheat, I have stated just now the price at which I thought it could be done for. I may say there is not very much difference between the price I have named and the price actually charged by water. We know now that wheat can be carried from Winnipeg to Port Arthur for some six cents a bushel, over Lake Superior and through Georgian bay as far as Depot Harbour for some two cents a bushel, making eight cents, and we know that Mr. Booth has carried grain on his railway all the way from four and a half cents down to two and a half cents, from Depot Harbour to Montreal and in taking it to Montreal he had to tranship it at Coteau and carry it some 42 miles by water; notwithstanding that the cost was two and a quarter cents a bushel in some instances, and in other instances it was as high as four and a half cents, making a total maximum cost of ten cents by the rail and water route. I do not wish myself to be understood that we can carry wheat as cheaply by rail as by water. If you have a long stretch of water the freight should be about one-sixth of the freight by rail, that is if you are going on the high seas or on a long navigable reach where there would be no transshipment. But there are other things

to be taken into consideration; there is the maritime insurance, which is very high; and then you must remember you are working only for seven months of the year, and any grain that is left after the close of navigation must carry five months of interest, making it therefore more and more expensive to house and keep this grain until the next spring, whilst the railway will carry it at a little higher cost than water and you can freight all the year round by rail. It has been suggested that instead of building this Trans-continental line, it would be better to extend colonization roads from the existing railway at distances of 100 miles and extending 100 or 150 miles north. This has been suggested to the House, and probably will be in this House. Why after you have built these branches for 100 or 150 miles you will have just as much length of railway built as you have now and have no transcontinental road at all. It is self-evident that these branch roads, running north like blind alleys can never do the business that one grand transcontinental road can do, having an outlet at both ends. I do not see that there is any force in that argument. There will be necessarily at some distances, say 400 miles apart, some lines connecting from the south; for instance, the line that is now being built by the Ontario government. That line was supposed to be built up north to a distance of 130 miles, and by adding 30 miles more it will strike south of Lake Abitibi at the very point where this railway will pass, and therefore there will be connection by the railway being constructed by the Ontario government to North Bay, and from North Bay over the Grand Trunk Railway to Toronto. Speaking of Lake Abitibi, and that country, I wish to say that in 1888, I was sent out by the Ontario government to lay out the township of Evanturel on the Blanche river. There you are 30 miles south of where this road is supposed to pass, and every one seeing the state of agriculture on Lake Timiskaming in the townships of Guigues, Duhamel, &c., knows there is not in the province of Quebec any place where you can get better hay, better wheat, better oats, or better grain of any kind than right at the north end of Lake Timiskaming. That might be said of the two provinces,

because Lake Abitibi is partly in the province of Quebec and partly in the province of Ontario ; so what applies in this respect to one province applies to both.

In conclusion permit me to add that if we could remove the veil of the future and see what will be the condition of this new kingdom twenty years hence or fifty years hence when this lease will expire ; if we could see the towns and villages that will be settled along the line of this grand national transcontinental line, if we could see the enormous industries that will have sprung up throughout the districts through which the road will

pass, we would think this administration had performed a service indeed for this country, and when the history of this administration is written and when the life of the distinguished statesman who now rules the destinies of Canada is ended, and he has disappeared from the turmoil of politics, then indeed the brightest page in all his history will be the one where he first united the hearts of the people of his country and the next one will be when he joined the provinces of this Dominion by this long-solid continuous link of steel, the National Transcontinental Railway.
